

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Botker et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,661,683). Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Botker et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,661,683). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner alleges that Botker discloses a step-down circuit comprising “a clock control circuit (88) providing a plurality of clock signals (S2-S10B) based on a control signal (OFFV+B or OFFV-B or V+NV-), a charge pump circuit (90) receiving a first potential and supplying a second potential by switching a plurality of capacitors (40-46) with the plurality of clock signals, and a comparator (56-60) producing the control signal.” (Page 2, Item 4 of the Office Action). However, Applicant respectfully submits that the structure and reference numerals that the Examiner cites are not consistent with the figures and specification of Botker. For example, Botker does not disclose a clock control circuit 88 or any other structure identified by reference numeral 88. Botker starts with reference numeral 100. Botker also lacks a plurality of clock signals identified by S2-S10B, a charge pump circuit identified by 90, and the other structures noted by the Examiner.

Notwithstanding the above remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that Botker fails to show, teach, or suggest the elements of Applicant's Claim 1. For example, Botker does not appear to disclose a clock control circuit that provides a plurality of clock signals that have a frequency based on a control signal. Therefore, Claim 1, as well as its corresponding dependent claims, should be allowable over Botker.

Applicant notes that Chan et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,922,097), also cited by the Examiner, appears to disclose reference numerals that are consistent with those cited with respect to Botker. For example, FIG. 6 of Chan discloses a switch control circuit 88 that outputs signals S2-S10B. Therefore, Applicant concludes that Examiner mistakenly cited the Botker reference instead of the Chan reference.

Applicant further notes that the filing date of the present application is November 21, 2003, with priority claimed to JPSN 2002-341618, filed on November 26, 2002. Chan was filed on June 16, 2004. As such, Chan does not qualify as prior art under U.S.C § 102(e), 103(a), or any other anticipatory statute. Therefore, Applicant respectfully notes that Chan does not anticipate Claims 1 and 7.

OBJECTED TO CLAIMS

Claims 7 and 8 are objected to because they are improper. In particular, the Examiner alleges that Claims 7 and 8 are dependent claims that do not further limit the recitations of Claims 1 and 4, respectively.

Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 7 and 8 do further limit the recitations of Claims 1 and 4. For example, the Examiner states that Claim 7 merely renames the step-down circuit of Claim 1 as a semiconductor integrated circuit. Applicant notes that a step-

down circuit and a semiconductor integrated circuit are not necessarily analogous. For example, the step-down circuit of Claim 1 may include elements (such as the clock control circuit, the charge pump circuit, etc.) that are structurally separated from one another (i.e. located on different integrated circuits and/or on a printed circuit board. In contrast, Claim 7 requires that the elements of the step-down circuit are integrated on a semiconductor integrated circuit. As such, Claim 7 further limits the step-down circuit of Claim 1. Similarly, Claim 8 further limits the power supply circuit of Claim 4. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 7 and 8 are proper.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner states that Claims 4-6 and 10 are allowed, and that Claims 3, 8, and 9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the allowable subject matter. However, Applicant elects to defer amending the claims into independent form until after the above remarks are considered.

CONCLUSION

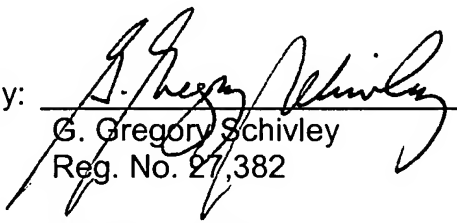
It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the

Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


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